UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/C.5/50/40
6 December 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fiftieth session
FIFTH COMMITTEE
Agenda item 116

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

Revised estimates under section 1, Overall policy-making, direction and coordination, section 32, Staff assessment, and income section 1, Income from staff assessment

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The major expansion in the role and activities of the Organization has resulted in a corresponding increase on the demands made on the Secretary-General. Consequently, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, which provides direct support to the Secretary-General in the establishment of general policy, executive direction, coordination and supervision of the work of the Organization, including its various programmes, has faced a significant increase in its workload. While this additional workload results largely from intensified political and peace-keeping activities, programmes related to humanitarian issues, reconstruction, rehabilitation and development, and growing requirements for their effective coordination, have also contributed to the additional demands made on the Secretary-General and his Executive Office. Furthermore, during the past years some of the inter-agency functions and speech-writing activities, which were previously carried out by other offices, have been integrated in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General.

2. During the biennium 1994-1995, owing to the significant increase in scope and number of activities related to the good offices of the Secretary-General, peacemaking, preventive diplomacy and post-conflict peace-building, it has become necessary to appoint, in addition to two existing Special Advisers to the Secretary-General, one at the Assistant Secretary-General level funded from the regular budget and another at the Under-Secretary-General level funded from the Peace-keeping Support Account, an additional Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, at the Under-Secretary-General level, to assist the Secretary-General directly in the exercise of his responsibilities in the above areas. In that function, the Special Adviser assisted the Secretary-General in monitoring

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political and humanitarian activities in the geographical areas coming within his purview. He was also called upon to serve as the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General in fact-finding and other missions, and to assist the Secretary-General in ensuring policy coordination with regard to Secretariat support to the General Assembly and a number of global conferences. Owing to the ad hoc, evolving nature of the responsibilities and assignments entrusted to the Special Adviser, the related remuneration was made available from the commitment authority granted to the Secretary-General in General Assembly resolution 48/229 of 23 December 1993 on unforeseen and extraordinary expenditures. The appointment of the Special Adviser and its related costs were reported to the General Assembly in the context of the first performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 (A/C.5/49/43) and in the reports of the Secretary-General on special representatives, envoys and related positions (A/C.5/48/26 and A/C.5/49/50).

II. REVISED ESTIMATES FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

3. As regards the biennium 1996-1997, it has became apparent that in addition to the continuing requirements in relation to good offices, peacemaking, preventive diplomacy, post-conflict building and other activities related to the maintenance of peace and security, it would be necessary for the Secretary-General to have direct high level assistance on an ongoing basis in ensuring policy guidance and coordination in the provision of Secretariat support to the General Assembly and in the effective implementation of its decisions within the Organization, including in relation to global conferences convened by the General Assembly and relevant aspects of the work of the Economic and Social Council.

4. Accordingly, it is proposed that a temporary post at the Under-Secretary-General level be approved for the Special Adviser for the biennium 1996-1997. The related costs for salaries and common staff costs are estimated at $352,200. This proposal is in line with the observation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions contained in paragraph 14 of its third report (A/50/7/Add.2) in which it pointed out, inter alia, that the resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenditures was not intended to cover the establishment of positions on a continuing basis; and that positions which are required for the performance of functions of a continuing nature in the work of the United Nations should be budgeted in the United Nations regular budget for review and approval by the General Assembly, through the Advisory Committee.

5. The Special Adviser will be entrusted with monitoring and bringing to the attention of the Secretary-General policy issues which arise in relation to the provision of overall secretariat support to the General Assembly and its Main Committees, and of guidance and coordination in the implementation of its decisions. He will preside over the Secretariat coordinating committee on General Assembly matters, which brings together heads of relevant departments servicing the General Assembly, including the Department of Political Affairs, the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, the Department of Administration and Management, the Office of Legal Affairs and the Department of Public Information. As part of this function, the Special Adviser will be called upon to assist the Secretary-General in strengthening linkages

between the political, humanitarian and social activities of the Organization, and in providing coherent policy support to global conferences and relevant aspects of the work of the Economic and Social Council. Arrangements in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General in support of the General Assembly would thus parallel those already in place with respect to arrangements in support of the Security Council.

6. While substantive responsibility for all the above activities remains with the concerned line department, the Special Adviser provides direct support to the Secretary-General in relation to matters that require his personal attention, and/or involve coordination among different substantive departments, so as to ensure that Secretariat actions and positions in the functional and geographical areas coming within the purview of the Special Adviser are both responsive and consistent. The Special Adviser also has representational responsibilities on behalf of the Secretary-General. In carrying out these functions, the Special Adviser will work in close consultation with the heads of department concerned.

III. CONTINGENCY FUND

7. It is not anticipated that the additional requirement of $352,200 related to the cost of a temporary post at the Under-Secretary-General level can be met through termination, deferment, curtailment or modification of programmed activities under section 1, Overall policy-making, direction and coordination, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. In accordance with the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986, the additional expenditures would be accommodated under the provision of the contingency fund established for the biennium 1996-1997.

IV. SUMMARY

8. The additional appropriation required under section 1, Overall policy-making, direction and coordination of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997, for the establishment of an Under-Secretary-General post on a temporary basis in 1996 is estimated at $352,200. An additional appropriation of $92,800 would also be required under section 32, Staff assessment, offset by the same amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.